

From the Pulpit of the Japanese Baptist Church of North Texas
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Blessed Are Who Mourn

Matthew 5:1-4

5:1 Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him.

5:2 And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying:

5:3 “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

5:4 “Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

In a collage chemistry lab, a professor asked students to analyze the transparent liquid and figure out what it is. Students started to work on it but they had a difficult time figuring it out the nature of the liquid. After a long time, a student said to the professor, “Sir, I know what it is. These are human tears.” The professor answered, “That’s right. You did a good job!”, then he said “If you further analyze it, you may be able to tell whether these are happy tears or painful tears, but technology cannot tell the background information of these tears. Moreover, technology cannot heal the sorrow. Don’t assume that technology can do everything. Scientists and technologists always have to be humble to the mystery of life.”

That’s what the professor told the students and I think what he said is very true. Even psychology experts cannot completely tell the true meaning of human tears, we say Lord Jesus understands the meaning of our tears and comforts us. But why can we say that?

1. Jesus Wept

First, Lord Jesus wept tears for us and with us.

John 11:35 says “Jesus wept”. This is the shortest verse in the Bible, but it conveys very strong message. When Jesus was on the way to Lazarus’s tomb, whom Lord loved, He saw Lazarus’s sister Mary weeping together with the guests, and He was deeply moved and wept.

Lord Jesus already said, “I am the resurrection and the life” and he was already on the way to the tomb to make Lazarus rise again. He did not need any tears. Even if He knew that Lazarus would come back life shortly, Lord took Mary’s sorrow for the loss of loved one as if it were His.

What Lord Jesus felt sorry for was the reality of “death” that comes to every human at the end of their life. As the Bible says in Rome 6:23, “The wages of sin is death”, death is a result of sins. If humans did not have any sins, they would not have known death. Humans could have lived with God for eternity. The Lord wept not only for Lazarus and his sisters, but also for all mankind who are suffering with fear of death because of their sins.

Lord Jesus was about to face His own Cross when He made Lazarus rise again. Lord not only wept but He shed blood on the Cross and redeemed people from sins. He defeated death by His own death and gave us an eternal life. Lord does not allow people die from their sins. He mourned our sins and shed his blood with his tears to solve the problem.

Mathew 5:1 says, “Seeing the crowds ...” As we see 9:36 says, “When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd, ” Jesus must have seen the people with the same compassion when Lord

spoke on the mountain. Even when ordinary people could not tell the difference, Lord Jesus could see those who were weak and about to fall, and He gave the words of life to encourage them and guide them. Jesus is the Lord and King with the highest authority, but He is willing to stand with people and walk with them. “Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.” The word “comfort” also means “stay together”. The Lord did not just say “don’t cry and work hard” to those who mourn. He said to them that they were blessed. Why? Because our Lord shares the sorrow with people and stays with them. No blessings are greater than his presence.

2. Jesus Prayed with Tears

Secondly, Lord Jesus understands our tears and comforts us because He also prayed with tears to His Father. In Hebrews 5:7 “During the days of Jesus’ life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with fervent cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. ” When we read this verse, it reminds us of the Agony in the Garden, which Lord Jesus prayed before the cross. Lord Jesus had prayed with fervent cries and tears not only this time but also all the time.

According to Psalm 39:12, it says “Hear my prayer, O LORD, and give ear to my cry; hold not your peace at my tears! For I am a sojourner with you, a guest, like all my fathers.” The prayer of tears is the faithful believers’ common experience. Hannah was crying and praying in the temple, and it was fulfilled (1 Samuel 1:10). Hezekiah’s tears were remembered, and he was cured from an illness (2 Kings 20:5). Paul had been praying for the people with tears (Acts 20:19,

31). If these are the truths, it is obvious that Lord Jesus had prayed with tears in various occasions other than Gethsemane.

We cry in various occasions; however, Lord Jesus remembers you at the most when you cry in your prayers. Especially, when we notice that we hurt God's heart and pray for it, your prayers are most likely to be received.

In the 2 Corinthians 7:8-10, it describes about this kind of sadness. "For even if I made you grieve with my letter, I do not regret it--though I did regret it, for I see that that letter grieved you, though only for a while. As it is, I rejoice, not because you were grieved, but because you were grieved into repenting. For you felt a godly grief, so that you suffered no loss through us. For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death."

These "worldly grief" and "Godly grief" were drawn parallel to "regret" and "repentance". The regret means you think you shouldn't have done it but you have never felt sad for it. Nothing can be born from the action that you feel pity on yourself. However, if you realize your sin and feel sad about it, the repent can be born. This repent leads you to the forgiveness of your sin, and your new life starts from there. You always find some regrets in the life without repentance but you don't find any regrets if you repent in your life. We shall live without regrets by having repentance.

You can experience the true repentance in the quiet and deep prayer led by the Word of God and Holy Spirit. You can not experience it in your busy daily life. Moreover, you can't make it with quick prayer. In Ephesians 4:30, it says "And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God."

We should share the sadness of the Holy Spirit who feel sadness in our heart so that we will be led to the true repentance.

The worship is the time of joy. However, it is also time of “holy sadness” means we shall feel sorry about the things God does not feel happy. Especially, it is so before the Lord’ Supper. The worship, especially, the Lord’s Supper is the ultimate prayer time. At the Lord’s Supper, we should get closer to God with our faith as much as possible. Then, we would like to hear the voice of the Lord saying, “Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.”

3. Jesus Wipes Away Tears

Finally, we have to assure of that Jesus completely wipes away our tears.

Those who believe in Jesus Christ are forgiven and their new lives have begun. So, even though they used to mourn or cry over their unfortunate affairs, they no longer. They can admire God even at the time they’re under unjustified treatment or disrespect; because they know the believers are the children of God and will inherit the Heaven.

The believers, however, would not avoid all of every sorrow or tear; they are humans, and sometimes have to face pain and sorrow. They may tolerate insult against themselves, but if they saw or heard of Jesus Christ is insulted, it would hurts very much. Moreover, it is sad people don’t seek God. Even though we know the promise of inheritance, it is sad to be separated with our loving ones. Christian people are already saved from the punishment for their sins. They would be saved from the existence of sins later; but Christian people

are living between “already” and “later.” While their lives, they experience lots of fights and sorrows. Through all of them, still, they feel mighty peace and joy from above; God love and protect them through all troubles and problems. This is the life of Christian on the earth.

Later on, everything will be peace and joy; the Bible describes it in Revelation 21:1-4, saying, “Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, ‘Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.’”

This is the vision of the achievement of our salvation, but this salvation is not immediate; it has the beginning, growth, and finally completes. In John 1:14, it says, “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.” This verse explains the incarnation of Jesus, and this “dwelt” and “dwelling place” in Revelation are the same. “The dwelling place of God is with man,” means the achievement of salvation, and it began when Jesus Christ was born and dwelt among us. As John 1:12 says, “But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God,” “They will be His people” is now growing through 2000 years, when uncountable people believe in Jesus Christ and became the children of God. The

salvation begun from Jesus Christ is now on the way to achievement. The salvation given to you when you believe in Jesus Christ is now growing to achievement.

We are not immediately saved; through the acceptance of the salvation Jesus began leads you to recognize your growth of salvation dwelt in you, and you will be completely saved. Now you cannot see, but later you will see Jesus Christ face to face, as long as you totally accept Him. Even if you might encounter the affairs making you cry, Jesus will wipe your tears away later, as long as you trust and follow Him. At this time, the promise, “Their tears will be wiped away” will be achieved. Even if this world is full of sorrow, and you may go through the tears, Jesus will comfort you and help us walk day by day.

(Prayer)

Dear Father, we often mourn over our lives. Jesus, however, tells “Blessed!” to those who cry. Let us be enlighten and understand His deep mourning, with blood and tears, to give us the “blessing.” Let us be the ones mourn over as Your will allows. Let us be the ones wait for the day of achievement, when our tears will all be wiped away, and let us be the ones living in your comforts. In the name of Jesus who who mourn with us.